

FOCUS



Seeking Hope, Love, and Justice—Together in Community

The monthly newsletter from Hope Unitarian Church

VOL. 27, NO. 2 | FEBRUARY 2021

February's Theme

Deadly Sins

for

Lively Liberals



This Month at Hope

In February (and on into March), our theme is **Deadly “Sins” for Lively Liberals**. Is there room for sin in the modern liberal religious lexicon? In the coming weeks we’ll take a look at each of the seven deadly sins and consider their application in the lives of Unitarian Universalists.

On Feb. 14 **Tara Saylor** will host our third **Spirituality Workshop** during Adult Forum (but starting at 9:45 so we have plenty of time before the service).

Women of Hope will meet on Feb. 4 and view a TED Talk by Brené Brown, and the Black Writers Reading Group will read *How to Be an Antiracist*, by Ibram X. Kendi. Our Thursday **Cocktail Hour with Rev. Greg** gets more popular every week, and of course, the **Auction** will be going strong all month, culminating in our **FIRST** online live auction on Feb. 28.

Come join us in February for all of these events and services!

SUNDAY MORNINGS ON ZOOM

SOCIAL HOUR: 8:45

ADULT FORUM: 10:00

SERVICE: 11:00

See [p. 7](#) for Zoom links, Meeting IDs, and Passcodes

Services are also streamed live to our Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/HopeUnitarianChurch

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Calendar: Back (PDF version); Center (print version)

All in-person services and programs are cancelled until further notice.

While we are closed, we’re having virtual programming online! Our offerings include inspiring music from **Joseph** and **Chris**; thoughtful sermons from **Rev. Greg**; lively Zoom-based Adult Forum programs; and CYRE activities from **Tennille** and **Paige**.

PLEASE NOTE: Hope’s building remains closed and staff continue to work from home. Groups of fewer than 10 people may reserve the back patio to meet, but must observe social distancing. **They may not enter the church building.**



SHINING HOPE ON SOUTH TULSA

You probably know Hope Church's mission statement: "Seeking hope, love and justice, together in community." This statement

But what about community, you say. I say that when a community works together for transformation, bonds are built that will never be broken. Such a community will have great cause to celebrate! And it should. But sometimes community winds up being a congregation's primary focus. Members turn their gazes inward. Transformation is replaced with survival. Visitors become invisible, and community is reserved for members only.

guides, or should guide, virtually every decision the congregation makes and every action it takes. If a church activity, event or program directly supports the mission of the church, then its introduction or continuance may be considered. If it does not, it is probably best to drop it.

Am I speaking of Hope Church? That is for you to decide. That's your business, not mine. I believe Hope needs to be in South Tulsa! I believe the light and freedom of liberal religion needs to spread all over town! In other words, it's time to recommit to our mission and then put hands and feet on it. If Hope does this, I promise we won't be bored! But we may be changed. Life looks so different when we are open to possibility. And where there is possibility, there is hope.

You see, many churches try to be all things to all people, which creates confusion among members and visitors alike. Who are we, really? What do we stand for? How are we known? A good rule of thumb: if you have more committees than members to fill them, it is likely you are unfocused. If visitors only attend once, it is time to refocus. If folk claim to never know what is going on at church, then maybe it is because too many things are going on, period. If committees no longer function, it may be time to get back to mission.

The joy continues,

Please do not confuse busyness with success. Houses of worship are not in the business of keeping folk busy and happy. Instead, they transform lives to change the world. I don't know about you, but the latter sounds exciting and full of promise. I want to be part of a life-giving movement, with an outwardly focused mission, that needs me to help fulfill its purpose. I want to have a stake in the outcome of the mission I'm serving.

FEELING DOWN?

Is your life is out of balance? Are you feeling angry or depressed? Our interim minister, the Rev. Greg Stewart, is available for pastoral care and spiritual counseling by appointment. This is no time to "go it alone" when it comes to the "new normal." To schedule a confidential appointment, please contact Rev. Greg at the church.

Interact with the Interim Minister

Rev. Greg is Here for You!

Office Hours (virtual or by appointment): Tuesday through Saturday, 8:30 a.m–4:30 p.m

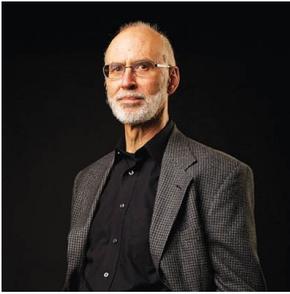
Sacred Day Off: Monday

On Call: For pastoral emergencies, 24/7

Appointments: Call Rev. Greg at (918)800-4803 to schedule

Social Times (on Zoom):
Thursday Cocktail Hour, 4:00–5:00 p.m.

Class Offered: Black Writers Book Group, second Tuesdays, 5:30 p.m. on Zoom



Music News

By Dr. Joseph Rivers, Music Director

As we enter into a new period during which we leave behind us the recent political turmoil, we still have the challenge of the pandemic in our midst. The vaccines offer hope, but as this may yet take a lot of time to make a difference, we continue to deliver music virtually through weekly services with a small worship team live from the Hope Sanctuary. We are also preparing music for the coming virtual auction activities and festivities.

Speaking of the Hope Sanctuary brings to mind the notion of “sanctuary,” which is the place from which we musicians deliver our musical service to the community. Some of the various dictionary definitions include the following: “A place of refuge or safety; a holy place, a temple or church; the inmost recess or holiest part of a temple or church,” etc.

We need not fear to use this word for the place from which we proclaim just and truthful values and provide music as an offering to the community. When riotous insurrectionists stormed the nation’s Capitol buildings, I could not help but feel that their intentions and actions had violated the “sanctuary” or “sacred altar” of our democracy. A sanctuary need not always be defined as a place of worship; it can also be thought of as the central place from which a great work emanates and is sanctified through commitment to our values. It is no surprise that the inauguration, another ritual of our democracy, was accompanied by inspirational music and poetry, sealing the sanctity of that moment.

NEW! Members-only publication

In February we will launch a new weekly newsletter just for members of Hope. *Hope Connects* will have news about the congregation that we don’t usually share with the broader public, such as cares and concerns and events that are primarily of interest to members.

Highlights will continue to go out as well, but it will be shorter than it is currently, and will focus on weekly events and service information.

If you’re a member, watch your email during the first week of February for the first issue of *Hope Connects*!



Zoom Training!

Eve Bjornsgaard, Hope’s Technology Assistant, is hosting a Zoom training session Monday, Feb. 1 at 10 a.m. for anyone who wants to feel more comfortable using Zoom. She will present on how to create breakout sessions, record meetings, share screens, and post agendas or slideshows. Please RSVP to hold a seat to Evesoasis@gmail.com or call or text

her at 918-361-8444.

Join the Zoom meeting here:

<https://zoom.us/j/7415471802?pwd=YWt4SHFkcnk2Ym9rZ05iYXJNY3ZxZz09>

Meeting ID: 741 547 1802

CONTACT US

Pastoral Care

Rev. Greg:

greg@hopeuu.org

Care Team:

careteam@hopeuu.org

Religious Education

Tennille Wilson:

tennille@hopeuu.org

Paige Clark:

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Childcare:

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Music

Dr. Joseph Rivers:

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Outreach

outreach@hopeuu.org

Board

boardpresident@hopeuu.org

Church Administration/ Office

hopeuu@hopeuu.org

(918)481-0999

Technology Assistance

eve@hopeuu.org

(918)361-8444

Building/Office Hours:

The building is currently CLOSED. If you have a church-related reason to get into the building, please contact the church office.

www.hopeuu.org

February's Generosity Recipient

By Anita Mills

Catholic Charities of Eastern OK (CCEOK)

Catholic Charities is providing emergency assistance, including food assistance to over 500 families a day – up from 75–100 families a day in Tulsa before COVID. Due to the increased demand, they have increased storage capacity for fruits, vegetables, meats, and other frozen products by installing new semi-size freezers and refrigerators in the warehouse.

All services are provided by staff and more than 3600 volunteers.

The main campus of CCEOK is located on North Harvard in Tulsa, but there are service centers in McAlester, Poteau, Muskogee, Broken Arrow, Bartlesville, and Stillwater. CCEOK welcomes all without regard for race, color, or creed; approximately 85% of those they serve are not Catholic. A majority of those they help are the working poor, barely getting by on a daily basis.

Catholic Charities relies upon giving by individuals and charitable organizations because it is not a United Way agency and does not receive funding from the Diocese of Tulsa and Eastern Oklahoma.

Join the Adult Forum on **Sunday, February 7**, when CEO Deacon Kevin Sartorius will join us to talk about Catholic Charities and its work in the community.

To donate online to our Generosity recipient, go to www.hopeuu.org/Generosity

You can also mail a check to

**Hope Unitarian Church
PO Box 35284
Tulsa, OK 74153**

Please write "Generosity" in the memo line.

Outreach News

Monthly Meal for the Day Center

Thank you to all the volunteers who helped with our monthly meals for the Day Center in January!

Anita Ward and **Janet Nobles** did the shopping, and **Maggie Scott** did the pre-cooking. **The Tracy family** did the cooking on Saturday, and **Janet and Anita** delivered the food to the Day Center.

Thanks to all those who brought cereal and donations, and to all our Feed the Homeless volunteers!

Cereal Days

This month's CEREAL DAYS will be **Friday, Feb. 19** from **10 a.m. to noon** and **Saturday, Feb. 20** from **2 to 4**. If you have cereal (no Cheerios, please) or other donations for the Tulsa Day Center for the Homeless, please bring them by at those times.

Our Cereal Days continue to help us help the Day Center and its clients. Thank you for your generosity!

NEW!

You can now donate to Hope by texting *give* to **833-698-1348**. When you send your text, you'll receive a reply with a link to donate. You can specify the fund you want to use ("Generosity," "Operating Fund," etc.) using the drop-down menu next to the amount.



ACTION Update

By Anita Mills

ACTION previously was involved in connecting renters facing eviction to rental assistance programs in Tulsa that utilize CARES Act funds.

Currently ACTION is actively working with 20 nonprofits identifying and taking applications from residents who are behind on their utility bills as a result of the pandemic. Tulsa Community Foundation is serving as disbursing agent so that when an application from a person who is behind on utilities is approved, TCF sends payment directly to the utility company. This has been a monumental effort, identifying nonprofits who are able to work on this, as well as reaching out to utility companies to obtain their cooperation. A total of \$3.5 million has been allocated to this effort, and a household can receive up to \$1000 in utility assistance.

These are the most current and immediately impactful efforts ACTION has been undertaking.

For a full report of ACTION's 2020 work, go to: https://www.actiontulsa.org/2020_review

Garden and Grounds *by Julia Harris*

Coe McGinley, Nancy Hamill, Gail Hawk, and Julia Harris have been using warm days to enjoy and work in the woods. If you see piles of greenbriar and honeysuckle, you know we have been there. Walk our trails to enjoy the beauty of trees without their leaves and you may discover signs of who (or what) else has been there, too. Pairs of Eastern Kingbirds and Red-shouldered hawks are already easy to spot.



The view from the back patio in winter

February Birthdays

Mandie Carlile	4
Ike Walker	6
Mary Baird	7
Ruth Jackson	7
Alice Van Wormer	10
Corrie Dorman	12
Adriana Rivers	12
London Carlile	14
Chris Dunn	22
Joey Dewiel	23

Are you receiving our email communications?

If you aren't receiving *Highlights*, *Focus*, or churchwide announcements by email, you might be missing out!

You can sign up for any of these on our website here:

<http://hopeuu.org/blog/newsletter/>

You can also call the church at (918)481-0999 or email us at hopeuu@hopeuu.org to be added to any of our email lists.

Care Team Corner *By Deborah Whittaker*



How to Listen When You Disagree
Division is a choice.

Life isn't a Facebook feed.

Our love, our listening, must *bring in*, not *edit out*.

Dare to listen, dare to be quiet, dare to seek understanding; in the end, it's the

people we need to love, not their opinions.

The truth is, if our love can hold space for paradox, tension, and disagreement, there's room for all types of beliefs and opinions.

Being heard is so close to being loved that most people can't tell the difference.

How do you listen when you disagree with what's being said?

Who in your life really listens to you?

Thoughts from the Urban Confessional, A Free Listening Movement

Are you following us on Facebook?

We post events and other church news there, as well as photos and even an occasional video! We'd love to connect with you.

<https://www.facebook.com/HopeUnitarianChurch/>



February Events

Women of Hope

Thursday, Feb. 4, 7:00 p.m. on Zoom

In addition to socializing, we will watch a TED Talk by Brené Brown. We hope you can make it!

Zoom link: www.hopeuu.org/WomenOfHope (Meeting ID: 961 8760 8554; Passcode: 206460)

Hope's Online Auction – Coming this Month!



Dates

NOW: Website open. Bidder registration open. Donations are being accepted.

Wednesday, February 24, 12:00 midnight: Deadline for donations.

Sunday, February 28, 7:00pm: Online bidding begins! Auction kickoff on Zoom with MC James Donovan and special entertainment.

Saturday, March 6, 7:00pm: Online bidding closes. Closing celebration on Zoom with a few live auction items, entertainment, and more!

You may register and bid at any time up until the Auction closes. Don't forget to buy a ticket once you've registered!

Pick-up, Drop-off, and Delivery will be available – Times and dates will be announced shortly. Watch your email!

Questions?

Not a cook? Need donation ideas? Prefer not to upload donations to the site or register online, and would like a paper form? Miss the Adult Forum about the auction and want to see a recording? For these and any other questions, please contact the Auction Committee at auction@hopeuu.org.

Online Auction Website: <https://charityauction.bid/>



Cocktail Hour with Rev. Greg

4:00 p.m. every Thursday on Zoom

Grab a drink and tell us what you think!

Did you know that Hope Church offers a weekly cocktail hour, hosted by Rev. Greg? Bring your beverage of choice and virtually join other members in a free-flowing conversation that will have you coming back for more. Recent topics: Sing Noel, Monarch butterfly gardens, whether the church should move to a new location, leads on where to get vaccinated, and, of course, the election. Please make it a point to stop by any Thursday, 4:00 to 5:00 p.m. We'll save a stool for you (with proper ID, of course).

Zoom link: www.hopeuu.org/CocktailHour (Meeting ID: 980 3776 9619; Passcode: 307923)

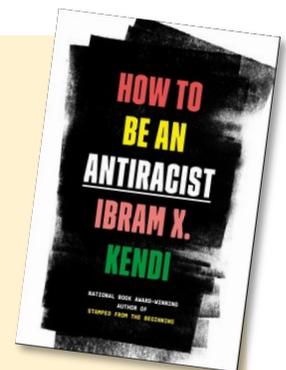
Black Writers Reading Group

Tuesday, Feb. 9, 5:30 p.m. on

Zoom

This month's pick for Rev. is *How to be an Antiracist*, by Ibram X. Kendi.

This group meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 5:30, and you can still join, or just drop in occasionally. Contact Molly (molly@hopeuu.org) if you'd like to be involved.



Calling All Chocolatiers...

...chocoholics, and lovers of all things chocolate! The Hope Auction Committee invites you to add your chocolate delights to the auction. We couldn't forget the wildly popular and delicious Valentine's Day Chocolate Auction, normally held this month and sponsored by Women of Hope. But this is no normal year, so we have incorporated it into this year's auction. To contribute, please go to the auction website under **Donate!** and fill out the form to upload your chocolate treat. Of course, any food item would be welcome as a donation!

Services This Month at Hope

Theme: Deadly “Sins” for Lively Liberals

2/7 – “Deadly Sins for Lively Liberals: Introduction”

Rev. Greg Stewart

Now what, a series on sin? Yes, if we understand sin as separation. Specifically, sin is the intentional division of that which has been declared whole. It is a dualism gone wild. It opposes the “Out of Many, One” worldview of the Oglala Sioux we considered last month. Is there room for sin in the modern liberal religious lexicon? Or shall we drop it altogether? The helpful answer, it seems, lies somewhere between these two poles. In the coming weeks we’ll take a look at each of the seven deadly sins and consider their application in the lives of Unitarian Universalists.

Adult Forum: Catholic Charities (Generosity Recipient)

2/14 – “Deadly Sins for Lively Liberals: Pride”

Rev. Greg Stewart

It is quoted too often: “Pride goeth before a fall.” Yet we begin with pride because it is the source of the other six deadly sins. Gluttony, anger, greed, envy, lust, and sloth all spring from the garden of pride we cultivate in our souls. Pride left unchecked keeps us from knowing who we really are and isolates us from those we need the most. We can become egotistical and arrogant, putting ourselves at the center of the universe. Aristotle had much to say about pride and his words inform my own words about it.

Adult Forum (9:45): Spirituality Workshop #3

2/21 – “Deadly Sins for Lively Liberals: Gluttony”

Rev. Greg Stewart

How are those New Year’s resolutions working out for you? The gyms and health clubs always report an uptick in membership in January followed by a downturn come Feb. 1. The mind begins rationalizing, “I’m going to eat that because I deserve it. I’ve worked so hard on this diet that’s time for a diet-free day. I can always start up again tomorrow.” Gluttony becomes “sinful” when our obsession with food borders on addiction and drives our decision-making. The result is isolation from others with a little self-hate on the side. There are antidotes to gluttony, and we’ll explore them together on Sunday.

Adult Forum: TBA

2/28 – TBA

Adult Forum: TBA

ADULT FORUM

February 14th will be the 3rd Spirituality: Spirit of Life workshop: **The Stirrings of Compassion: Caring for One Another.**

Tara Saylor will be our host. Please come and show support!

9:45 to 10:45 am

We can always use more help!

Barb Witt

VP Programs

Online Services

The Zoom link for our Sunday services is

www.hopeuu.org/SundayService

NEW Meeting ID: 499751

Please note that the Meeting ID has changed. The Passcode is no longer required.

Services begin at 11 a.m.

Social Hour: Now EVERY Sunday at 8:45!

www.hopeuu.org/SocialHour

Adult Forum: 10 a.m. (9:45 on Jan. 10)

www.hopeuu.org/AdultForum

Children’s Church: 2:30 p.m.

www.hopeuu.org/ChildrensChurch

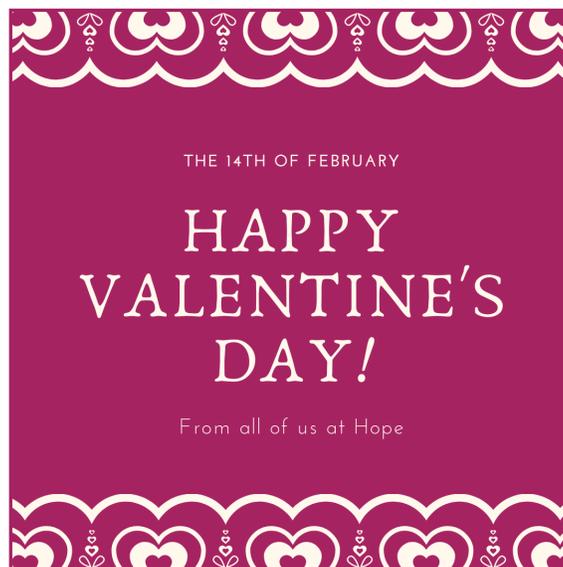
Meeting ID: 932 9801 6660

Passcode: 124851

As of the end of January, the Meeting IDs and Passcodes for Social Hour and Adult Forum are in flux, and might change during the month. Please watch our weekly publications to get the correct ones.

Having technical difficulties?

Contact our Technology Assistant, **Eve Bjornsgaard**. She can help you get set up on Zoom, no matter what kind of device you’re using! If you need to host a Zoom meeting for your committee or team, she’ll show you how. Email her at eve@hopeuu.org, or even better: text her at **(918)361-8444**.





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 hopeuu@hopeuu.org
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Seeking Hope, Love, and Justice—Together in Community

FOCUS v. 27, no. 2, February 2021 by Hope Unitarian Church
 8432 S. Sheridan Road, Tulsa OK 74133-4137

TO:



Hope Unitarian Church is an inclusive, affirming congregation.

2020–2021 Board Members and Trustees

Lee Ann Cole, President
Anita Mills, President-Elect
David Lynn, VP of Finance and Planning
Barbara Witt, VP of Programs
Judy Sims, Secretary
Elizabeth Obal, Treasurer
James Donovan, Past President
 Trustees: **Bettina Larsen**, **Brian Tolle**



Our Staff

The Rev. Gregory Stewart, Interim Minister
Tennille Wilson, Director of Religious Education
Paige Clark, Youth Director
Dr. Joseph Rivers, Director of Music
Molly Ives Brower, Church Administrator
Eve Bjornsgaard, Technology Assistant
Chris Powell, Pianist
Susan Michael, Michelle Steyve, Nora Potter,
 Childcare
Rebecca Jones, Accountant (off-site)



HOPE UNITARIAN CHURCH

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 hopeuu@hopeuu.org
 www.hopeuu.org



February

2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Zoom Training, 10 am	2	3	4 Cocktail Hour, 4pm Women of Hope, 7pm	5	6
7 Social Hour, 8:45am Adult Forum, 10am Service, 11am Children's Church, 2:30pm	8	9 Black Writers Reading Group, 5:30 p.m.	10 Hope Singers, 7pm	11 Cocktail Hour, 4pm	12	13
14 Social Hour, 8:45am Adult Forum, 9:45 am Welcoming Committee, 2pm Children's Church, 2:30pm	15	16	17 Hope Singers, 7pm	18 Cocktail Hour, 4pm	19 Cereal Days 10-noon	20 Cereal Days 2-4 Feed the Homeless
21 Social Hour, 8:45am Service, 11am Children's Church, 2:30pm	22	23	24 COVID Response Team, 5pm Hope Singers, 7pm Deadline for Auction Donations	25 Cocktail Hour, 4pm	26	27
28 Social Hour, 8:45am Service, 11am Children's Church, 2:30pm Auction Kickoff! 7pm		Board of Trustees, 7pm		Cocktail Hour, 4pm		

Zoom Links

Some links, Meeting IDs, and Passcodes are unavailable at the time of publishing. Please watch our weekly publications to get those.

Women of Hope: www.hopeuu.org/WomenOfHope

Social Hour: www.hopeuu.org/SocialHour

Adult Forum: www.hopeuu.org/AdultForum

Sunday Service: www.hopeuu.org/SundayService (Meeting ID: 499751; no passcode required)

Children's Church: www.hopeuu.org/ChildrensChurch (Meeting ID: 932 9801 6660; Passcode: 124851)

Hope Singers: www.hopeuu.org/HopeSingers (Meeting ID: 349 768 514; Passcode: 003843)

Cocktail Hour: www.hopeuu.org/CocktailHour

Black Writers Reading Group: Contact Molly Brower, molly@hopeuu.org

Board of Trustees: www.hopeuu.org/BoardMeeting

COVID Response Team: www.hopeuu.org/COVIDResponseTeam